

Letter from Alexander Graham Bell to Mabel Hubbard Bell, May 6, 1902, with transcript

ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL TO MABEL (Hubbard) BELL Beinn Bhreagh, C. B. May 6th, 1902. Mabel, my darling little wife:

Your telegram that Daidums would not start before the 31st, reconciles me to my presence here. I have been feeling very unhappy about the matter all the way up. I have been so longing to go on with my interrupted work here — everything seemed to conspire to keep me in Washington — week after week — month after month — passed away — and I have realized to the full the meaning of the phrase “Hope deferred maketh the heart sick” — and then when at last the time came when it was possible to go — came the decision to send Daisy to Europe at once. I have been feeling all the way here — that it was very selfish of me to come on now and leave dear little Daidums to go off to the ends of the earth alone — without at least seeing her off and saying good bye — and selfish to leave you to come on here all alone. The only way to come here was to COME — but I would not have come had I not had an inward conviction that more than “a few days” would be required for Daisy and Josephine Sicard to complete their arrangements — quite apart from the difficulty of securing accommodations on the steamer at short notice at this season.

How that I know they will not leave till the 31st, I am satisfied — for I can make the kite experiments I want, and settle all details concerning sheep — in a few days .

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When I have settled experimentally that the cellular construction is all right — that we can build a large kite by compounding it of many small ones — without reducing lifting power — then I can confidently give instructions to go ahead with man-lifting contrivance and leave the laboratory to see Daidums off and bring you here.

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I want you here now and I DON'T WANT YOU . I love you my darling — and want to feel your arms around me — and have you all to myself — if only for a little while — before others can claim you again. And yet I don't want you just now — because I am troubled about myself and want to put myself in good condition before you come here. I know quite well there is nothing really the matter with my heart — and that the sensations I have experienced can be perfectly explained — without any supposition of that kind — by the fact that I weigh 247 pounds without my clothes. I know by experience that I can't possibly reduce that weight when you are around — and yet I realize that it is a dangerous weight for me to take to Minneapolis in July. I fear the States in the hot weather. If duty calls me there year after year in the sultry summer season — the time will come when it will be too late to repair damages — heat prostration will end.all. Now I am well — and know my constitution is sound — let me have a chance to take myself in hand — and reduce my weight — and exercise — as I think best . I must go to Minneapolis in July — I want to begin to prepare now.

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I don't want you to interfere with my diet. I don't want you to write to Maggie to give me this or that or the other thing. I want to look after myself for a little while at least. Just give me a chance.

The weather here is glorious. Clear and cool — Invigorating and refreshing. I have enjoyed the trip — although it has been long and monotonous.

I left Washington Friday afternoon about 4:50 and have only now arrived — Tuesday evening about 9:30 P. M. — 4 days and nearly 5 hours.

Dr. Wines has telegraphed me today that Senator Platt's Amendment was adopted unanimously by the Senate. I do hope the House will concur.

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Bert takes the Congressional Record. I would like to see the discussion. Could you not find out the numbers containing it — and send up to the Capital and buy them for me.

Mr. Zable did not enjoy the sea voyage as much as I did — for it was his first sea voyage — and attended with the usual consequences!

I enclose note from Mr. Blanchard. He sends Librarian's Report with request that it be returned. I will have Mr. Zable copy it for you tomorrow and return the original.

I hope you have Miss Safford's Utah address. I forgot to get it before I left and telegraphed to her 4 yesterday not to forget to leave it — but fear she may have left Georgetown before it arrived. If you have not received it — please send out to her Georgetown boarding-place as she may have left it there. (Mrs. Monley's. Corner of 35 & P).

It is nice to be welcomed back here. House illuminated — and all seem glad to see me.

This is NOT written with my blood but with the only ink I can find here.

Want to hear how the Borchgrevink matter progresses. Won't Bert or Elsie write to me about it.

Hope your mother was pleased with the photograph and List of Contents. I love her and want to please her.

I love you and want to please you too my dear little wifie.

Your own, Alec. Mrs. A. Graham Bell, 1331 Connecticut Avenue, Washington, D. C.